



DEPARTMENT OF
**GAME & INLAND
FISHERIES**
CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

For Immediate Release

Contact: Dr. Megan Kirchgessner, megan.kirchgessner@dgif.virginia.gov, 804-837-5666

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE DETECTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CLARKE AND FAUQUIER COUNTIES

RICHMOND, VA — The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) conducted extensive chronic wasting disease (CWD) monitoring in CWD Disease Management Area 1 (Clarke, Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren counties) and Disease Management Area 2 (Culpeper, Madison, and Orange counties) this past hunting season. To date, over 900 deer have been tested for CWD from Disease Management Area 1 (DMA1) and over 1,500 deer have been tested from DMA2. Early test results have confirmed CWD in a deer harvested from Clarke County and in another deer harvested in Fauquier County. Results from samples collected towards the end of hunting season or collected through the statewide DGIF taxidermist-assisted CWD surveillance effort are still pending and will be released in the coming weeks.

These are the first detections of CWD in Clarke and Fauquier counties. Clarke County is already included in the northeast portion of DMA1 and the CWD-positive deer from Fauquier County was harvested less than 2 miles outside of the DMA1 boundary. DGIF is grateful to all cooperating hunters, processors, and taxidermists for their continued support of DGIF's efforts to monitor CWD's spread across the landscape. Working cooperatively with avid outdoorsmen and women is a crucial component of effective CWD surveillance.

CWD has been detected in twenty-six states and three Canadian provinces. This incurable disease, found in deer, elk, and moose in North America, is a slow and progressive neurologic disease that ultimately results in death of the animal. The disease-causing agent is spread through the urine, feces, and saliva of infected animals. Noticeable symptoms, though they may not appear in animals for 15 to 24 months, include staggering, abnormal posture, lowered head, drooling, confusion, and marked weight loss. There is no evidence that CWD can be transmitted naturally to humans, livestock, or pets, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise hunters to test all deer harvested from known CWD-positive areas and to not consume any animals that test positive for the disease.

Regulations pertaining to CWD, maps of affected states, and information about CWD can be found on the DGIF website at: www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/disease/cwd

####